

Using ffmpeg to create jpg thumbnails from flv files

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This is probably a task that every Flashcom developer will have to tackle at some stage: how to extract thumbnails images from an flv file, ideally automating this process with a free commandline tool such as **ffmpeg**.

I've had a shot at this once before, probably a year or two ago and I was somewhat successful. One key thing that I could not crack was the -ss flag in ffmpeg which allows you to seek to a position. Whenever I used that flag the jpg extraction/conversion wouldn't work, instead it returned something like 'unknown option -ss'.

But recently a user in my forum suggested to give this another try. I grabbed the ffmpeg executable from **Riva Encoder** and tried again - this time it worked, probably due to a newer version of ffmpeg.

For reference the syntax I used is below. This will produce an output file with the name of 1.jpg. It's also possible to add other text to the filename but ffmpeg insists to have a numbering system in there.

```
ffmpeg -i video.flv -an -ss 00:00:03 -an -r 1 -vframes 1 -y %d.jpg
```

the options are as follow: -i input file -an Disable audio recording -ss seek to (in this case second 3 to avoid black frame at start) -vframes no idea what this does, could be framerate? Anyone know? -y overwrite output file

Note: I am not sure if this will work reliably or at all with VP6 encoded files. Please post a comment if you know if it does or not.

My version of **ffmpeg can be downloaded here**.